and rehabilitation services. Presently, around 450 centres all over the country are being funded under the Programme with an annual allocation of over Rs. 20 crores.

Curb on child beggars

420. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Enterprising beggars both annoying and risky", which appread in the Times of India, (New Delhi), dated the 28th January, 2002; and

(b) if so, the concrete steps Government propose to take to curb child vendors and beggars at various inter-sections of roads posing a danger to drivers and others?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYANARAYAN JAT1YA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As reported by Department of Social Welfare, National Capital Territory of Delhi, Delhi Government, the Bomaby Prevention of Begging Act 1959 is also applicable to Delhi. Under this Act, an anti-begging squad has been constituted and Delhi Police has been authorized for apprehending beggars at public places. These beggars are then sent to 12 custodial institutions being run by the Government, where services like boarding, lodging, medical care, vocational training counselling and guidance are provided for weaning them away from beggary and making them self-»eliant.

Children below 18 years of age who are found begging are covered under Juvenile Justice Act. The Government is already running 14 separate institutions for such children where comprehensive services are provided for rehabilitation of the inmates like boarding, lodging, medical care, counselling/guidance, vocational training, education, recreation and placement.